

Supreme Court race tops list of early filing week matchups

By Jordan Schrader and Adam Lynn

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The longest-serving state Supreme Court justice will face a challenge this year from a longtime Pierce County attorney who is now a professor in South Korea.

Associate Chief Justice Charles Johnson and challenger Eddie Yoon were among the many candidates officially declaring for office Monday, including three other Supreme Court justices: Mary Fairhurst, Debra Stephens and the newly appointed Mary Yu.

Yoon registered as a Pierce County voter on Sunday. But he said Monday he's a Washington resident who commutes twice a year to teach at the Ewha Womans University law school. He makes his home in University Place, he said.

"I haven't moved to Korea for good," he said. "I just teach there. I'm no carpetbagger."

Yoon worked as an assistant Tacoma city attorney in the 1970s before moving on to private practice, where he represented criminal defendants and engaged in civil rights legislation. He once sued two Japanese corporations on behalf of a Korean native who said he was forced to do slave labor during World War II.

He vowed, if elected, to donate nearly half his annual salary to charity.

Johnson, who is seeking his fifth six-year term, is a Tacoma native and Gig Harbor resident. He holds the title of distinguished jurist in residence at Seattle University School of Law.

Johnson joined the court majority that handed down a decision in the case known as McCleary, saying the Legislature has not fulfilled its constitutional duty to fully fund schools -- and vowing to hold control of the case to make sure lawmakers follow through.

It's not clear what the court will do if it sees insufficient progress. Johnson is optimistic.

"We very clearly said we really don't want to be involved in this and we trust the Legislature will take the steps necessary to solve the problem, and we know that will happen," he said.

Also in Monday's filings, U.S. Rep. Denny Heck and his challenger, Pierce County Councilwoman Joyce McDonald, officially began their expected contest. Puyallup Republican McDonald stands between Olympia Democrat Heck and a second term in Congress.

U.S. Rep. Derek Kilmer, a Gig Harbor Democrat, also filed for a second term. Kilmer was an economic-development official and state senator before representing Tacoma and the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas in Congress.

A Port Angeles man filed Monday to challenge Kilmer and will appear on the ballot as W. (Greybeard) McPherson with the label, “States No Party Preference.”

McPherson’s website says he has been a soldier, carpenter, truck driver, mechanic and engineer and that Congress needs members “who are not owned by corporations and the super rich.”

STATE LEGISLATURE

Most of Monday’s filings were for legislative races, some of which will help determine partisan control in the state Senate. (Many legislative incumbents filed Monday to keep their seats, but they are not listed here unless a challenger or challengers also filed.)

In the 26th District that includes parts of Pierce and Kitsap counties, retired teacher and former local teacher’s union president Judy Arbogast of Olalla filed as a Democrat. She is challenging Port Orchard Republican Sen. Jan Angel, who beat an appointed Democrat last year.

Two challengers to Sen. Pam Roach of Auburn emerged Monday in the 31st District of King and Pierce counties. Roach’s fellow Republican Rep. Cathy Dahlquist of Enumclaw filed. So did Lane Walthers, an Enumclaw Democrat who declined to comment when asked for information about himself; he said he would send out a news release in a week or so.

The Senate GOP has often feuded with Roach but supported her in a news release Roach issued Sunday. “We are behind Pam,” Senate Republican campaign chairman Bruce Dammeier of Puyallup said in the release. “She is the one we are supporting in this race.” (Roach had not filed as of Monday.)

Seeking Dahlquist’s House seat are Drew Stokesbary, an Auburn Republican who works as an aide to King County Councilman Pete von Reichbauer, and Jonathon Dunn, a Lake Tapps biotechnology consultant who will appear on the ballot as an Independent Dem.

In another House race, Republican restaurateur Monique Valenzuela Trudnowski of University Place is vying with Republican Clover Park School Board member Paul Wagemann of Lakewood in the 28th District. University Place School Board President Christine Kilduff also filed as a Democrat for the seat held by Rep. Tami Green.

Meanwhile, Jason Bergstrom of Spanaway, who’s a Republican and a heating-and-cooling technician, is challenging Rep. David Sawyer of Lakewood, a Democrat and law clerk running for a second term in the 29th District.

In the 30th District centered in Federal Way, airport fire captain and Democrat Greg Baruso is challenging another lawmaker seeking a sophomore term, Republican state Rep. Linda Kochmar.

Jesse Young of Gig Harbor, appointed to fill former Rep. Angel's House seat in the 26th, and another Republican, Bill Scheidler of Port Orchard, both filed Monday to run for a full term in the House.

And Port Orchard Republican and dentist Michelle Caldier is challenging Gig Harbor Democratic Rep. Larry Seaquist for the other House seat in the district.

PIERCE COUNTY RACES

Former Gig Harbor City Councilman Derek Young, a Democrat, filed to run for Stan Flemming's seat on the County Council.

Young, 37, finished his fourth term on the Gig Harbor council in December. He runs his own graphic design business.

Flemming, R-Gig Harbor, said Monday he will file Friday for re-election to the District 7 seat.

Also filing for reelection Monday were a pair of incumbents: County Councilman Rick Talbert, a Democrat from Tacoma, and County Auditor Julie Anderson.

Two people have filed to fill the Pierce County District Court seat being vacated by Judge Pat O'Malley, who decided not to seek re-election after 12 years on the bench.

University Place attorney Karl Williams and Gig Harbor attorney Jeanette Lineberry both have filed for the Position 8 seat.

Williams, a former president of the Pierce County Minority Bar Association, sought appointment to another District Court seat last year but was among those passed over when the County Council appointed former deputy prosecutor Kevin McCann to the position.

Williams, who has served as a District Court pro-tem judge since 1996, unsuccessfully ran for a seat on that bench in 2010.

Lineberry is a former deputy prosecutor now in private practice. She also has worked as a pro-tem judge in District Court and Lakewood Municipal Court.

In Tacoma Municipal Court, state administrative law judge and former Pierce County deputy prosecutor Drew Hinke and veteran criminal defense attorney Rob Freeby have filed for the Position 2 seat.

Staff writer Steve Maynard contributed to this report

Read more here: <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2014/05/12/3192542/supreme-court-race-tops-list-of.html?sp=/99/296/#storylink=cpy>